

Message Text

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APPROVED BY EA - MR. HABIB

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 197975

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:PFOR, JA, KA

SUBJECT: JAPAN-KOREAN RELATIONS

SUMMARY: ON AFTERNOON OF SEPT. 9 HABIB MET WITH AMBASSADOR YASUKAWA TO DISCUSS CURRENT STATE OF GOJ-ROK RELATIONS. DURING REVIEW OF SITUATION YASUKAWA SAID THAT MAJOR IMPEDIMENT TO DESPATCH OF LETTER TO PRESIDENT PARK INSTEAD OF PRIME MINISTER WAS GOJ CONCERN THAT PARK WOULD REJECT CONTENTS AND THERE WOULD THEN BE NO HIGHER AUTHORITY IN ROKG TO WHICH TO APPEAL. END SUMMARY.

1. LETTER TO ROKG: YASUKAWA SAID THAT GOJ WAS PREPARED TO SEND LETTER TO ROKG WHICH WOULD: (A) EXPRESS AGAIN GOJ REGRET OVER DEATH OF MRS. PARK AND APPARENT INVOLVEMENT OF SOME ELEMENTS IN JAPAN IN INCIDENT; (B) STATE THAT JAPANESE AUTHORITIES ARE DOING UTMOST AND WILL CONTINUE TO DO UTMOST TO CARRY OUT INVESTIGATION IN COOPERATION WITH ROKG AUTHORITIES; (C) MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO PREVENT
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TERRORIST ACTIVITY IN JAPAN; AND (D) EMPHASIZE THAT BOTH GOVERNMENTS SHOULD COOPERATE TO PREVENT A FURTHER DETERIORATION IN RELATIONS. YASUKAWA SAID HOWEVER THAT QUESTION OF TO WHOM LETTER SHOULD BE ADDRESSED (PRIME MINISTER OR PRESIDENT) HAD NOT YET BEEN RESOLVED. HE SAID THAT PROBLEM WAS NOT THAT GOJ BEING STICKY ABOUT PROTOCOL BUT RATHER CONCERN WITHIN JAPANESE GOVERNMENT THAT IF LETTER IS SENT TO PARK AND PRESIDENT IS NOT SATISFIED WITH ITS

CONTENTS, THERE WOULD BE A COMPLETE IMPASSE. IF ON OTHER HAND GOJ WAS SURE THAT PRESIDENT WOULD ACCEPT CONTENTS, LETTER TO PARK MIGHT BE POSSIBLE. AMBASSADOR HABIB ASKED IF GOJ HAD INFORMED ROKG OF THIS ELEMENT, AND YASUKAWA SAID HE DID NOT KNOW. AMBASSADOR HABIB SAID THAT HE DID NOT THINK THAT THIS POINT HAD EVER BEEN MADE CLEAR TO ROKG BUT THAT HE WOULD BE SURE THAT IT WAS COMMUNICATED DISCREETLY.

2. SPECIAL ENVOY: YASUKAWA SAID THAT HE FELT THAT GOJ WAS RELUCTANT TO SEND AN ENVOY TO KOREA. AMBASSADOR HABIB SAID THAT WE HAD RECEIVED IMPRESSION THAT ROKG ATTACHED GREAT IMPORTANCE TO SPECIAL ENVOY AND IN FACT ENVOY MIGHT BE EVEN MORE IMPORTANT TO KOREANS THAN LETTER OR ITS CONTENTS. HE CAUTIONED, HOWEVER, THAT THIS SHOULD BE CAREFULLY SOUNDED OUT. HE RECALLED FACT THAT AT TIME OF KIM TAE JUNG INCIDENT, PRIME MINISTER KIM HAD BROUGHT LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER AND KOREANS WERE DRAWING STRICT PARALLELS BETWEEN GESTURES MADE BY ROK AT THAT TIME TO GESTURES EXPECTED FROM GOJ IN CURRENT SITUATION. AMBASSADOR HABIB SAID, HOWEVER, THAT WE ARE CONVINCED THAT THE ROKG IS PREPARED TO ACCEPT SOMETHING LESS THAN ITS FULL DEMANDS BEING MET BY GOJ.

3. POLICE INVESTIGATION: YASUKAWA SAID THAT GOJ WOULD INFORM ROKG IN A FEW DAYS OF THE FINDINGS OF JAPANESE INVESTIGATION INTO INCIDENT. HABIB SUGGESTED THIS BE DONE IN SUCH A WAY AS TO GIVE IMPRESSION THAT THE INVESTIGATION WILL BE KEPT OPEN AND NOT CLOSED OUT UNTIL ATMOSPHERE BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES HAD IMPROVED. KISSINGER

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